

CHAPTER: IV <b>APPLICATION</b>	SECTION: 3 <b>APPLICATION PROCESS</b>	COMAR: <b>07.03.03.04</b>
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## REQUIREMENTS

- A. An individual may file an application for TCA, whether potentially eligible or not
- B. An individual applying for TCA may choose any person during any aspect of the application process to assist him/her
  1. Applicants who do not speak English or have limited English proficiency must have access to an interpreter. The local department is responsible for providing an interpreter. The interpreter may be:
    - A local department staff member
    - An individual designated by the applicant, or
    - An individual outside the agency who is proficient in the customer's language
  2. An interpreter cannot be a minor child.
  3. The Maryland Office of New Americans (MONA) can provide a list of interpreters and organizations that offer these services
    - The telephone number is 410–767-7514
- C. The applicant files for assistance on forms specified by the local department and approved by DHR
  1. The application process starts with an application containing, at a minimum, the applicant's name, address, and signature
    - The LDSS may use either the **DHR/FIA CARES 9700 Assistance Request Form (ARF)** or the CARES generated form
    - A local department staff member stamps the date the ARF is received to record the filing date
    - The filing date must be recorded if the minimum information is completed, but the local department can have applicants complete all the information on the ARF
    - The ARF is also generated from CARES after the case is screened
  2. Generate the rest of the application from the data entered into CARES during the interview. Have the customer sign the 9707 Rights and Responsibility document
    - The local department may also use a paper application package, the **DHR/FIA CARES 9701 Eligibility Determination Document (EDD), 9701A Facts Sheet and a 9707 Rights and Responsibility Form**

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- Use the **Paper Application Package** when CARES is not in operation
- 3. The applicant signs the system generated application at the end of the interview
  - Both parents must sign if both are in the home
- D. Accept all applications during the local department's normal business hours
  1. Applicant interviews may be on the day the application is filed
  2. If same day service is not possible, offer the first appointment on the next available business day
- E. The applicant, an authorized representative, or someone acting responsibly for the applicant when that person is incompetent or incapacitated signs the application under penalty of perjury
- F. The basic components of the application process are the same in each local department, but the forms and sequence may differ

### **COMPONENTS OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

- A. A screener, who must be someone other than the Family Investment case manager responsible for the application interview and case decision, screens each individual on CARES
- B. The screener enters basic identifying information into CARES and:
  1. Determines whether anyone on the application is known to the system
  2. Records any previously assigned Client ID numbers for the applicants
  3. Determines possible programs for which the family may be eligible, and
  4. Prints out the system ARF for the applicant to sign
- C. A case manager conducts a face-to-face interview with the applicant and
  1. Determines, with the applicant, the help the family needs and the services which best meet those needs
  2. Explores potential resources, including but not limited to:
    - Unemployment benefits
    - SSI

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- Social Security Benefits, including disability and survivor benefits
  - Workman's Compensation
  - Child Support
3. Explores possible options
    - TCA is the option of last resort
    - Other options may include:
      - a. Personal resources
      - b. Family resources
      - c. Community resources
      - d. Welfare Avoidance Grants
      - e. Emergency Assistance
      - f. Child Care and Medical Assistance
      - g. Other state and local benefits and services
  4. Completes an assessment of the family's needs, strengths and abilities
    - An assessment may include testing or the use of other evaluation tools
    - Substance abuse screening is required for adult and minor parents
    - Family violence history for all families
  5. Develops a mutually agreed upon Independence Plan which outlines:
    - Family's goals
    - Steps to achieve the goals
    - Responsibilities of the applicant and local department to implement those steps
  6. Provides written and verbal information about the:
    - Applicant's rights and responsibilities
    - Program requirements
    - Verifications needed
  7. Offers each person, age 16 and above who is present, the opportunity to register to vote

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- D. Most applicants need to begin moving toward independence during the application process by:
1. Filing for and cooperating with child support enforcement services
  2. Searching for a job
  3. Applying for other benefits to which they may be entitled
- E. The case manager shall have no close association or kinship with any household member of the case. Where there is a close association or kinship the local staff shall disqualify himself or herself from the eligibility process. The LDSS must reassign the case to an impartial DSS staff by the supervisor. The assigned staff cannot seek information from or discuss the case with the disqualified staff.
- F. The case manager decides about eligibility within 30 days

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Application - Interview
- Application - Assessment
- Application - Agreement
- Application- Family Violence
- Application - Substance Abuse
- Application - Fraud
- Application - Verifications
- Application - Quality Control
- Application - Decisions
- Other Programs and Services - Voter Registration